

7-30-1862

Letter from Mary C. Shannon, to Sarah Whitney, 1862 July 30

Mary C. Shannon

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[July 30/23]

My dearest Sarah & Our darling Nanakin -
Here am I in the "Waumbek House"
on Jefferson Hill, with loving friends,
all about me, and a world of grandeur
& beauty sweeps the whole horizon, and
yet my heart is filled with pain
that you are not here to drink in
this glory with us - I cannot be
comforted that you are not here, and
had I but the Poets or Painters' power
I wld. make you suffer like mine. Yr.
yearning shld. be so great that nothing
but a speedy trip to this region
shld. afford relief. -

(We left Newtonville
past 11 o'clock Sat. morn. arrived at
Portland just before 11 o'clock, then
we had 91 miles to reach Epsom
wh. was full of interest from its
barrenness, its wildness & beauty. -
One style of fence showed me exceeding

Made of immense roots of trees, ~~laid~~ about
two feet of the trunk remaining, wh. is turned
downwards, forming a pedestal for the
most enormous roots, and of the most
fantastic & picturesque appearance
you can well conceive, bleached by
the storm, & sunshine of many years,
they have become polished like marble,
then others are charred, giving
you wonderful forms in stone. —
Then you pass large forest tracts, that
have been cleared, only leaving stumps,
wh. give the impression of immense
old-fashioned burying-grounds —
"Bryant's Pond" is a beautiful spot, —
a large body of water bordered by
rich growth of trees; as we approach
Graham the "hid & go seek" of the
Mountain peaks is truly beautiful,
catching a glimpse here & there
then suddenly veiled by thick
forests, on yr. right & left, till you
are again startled by a magnificent

view that fills you with rapture
and you find yourself in Gorkan at half
past five o'clock - We at once inquired
for the Stage - of course there was none
going to Jefferson Hill; - Two young
gentlemen that came in the car, with
us, heard me make the inquiry at
once said they were bound for the
same place & expected Mr. Maistee
the Landlord to send for them, and
to our great joy ^{at once} ~~one~~ was in waiting a
wagon with two seats, for five travellers,
the driver & all our baggage, - but
we managed grandly - The driver &
young men in front, Mr. Parker & Mary
on the next, and I seated on the
trunk, riding backwards with my
limbs dangling down, yet I had
the best seat of all "a position uneasy
it is true, though at the same
time both ^{both} ~~both~~ ^{consoling & new}", for such
glory mine eyes never look upon
the purple bloom, the violet tint, nor

unspeakable wonders clothed the whole
mountain range, the deep shadows &
the setting Sun adding varied & constant
charm. — Notwithstanding all this, marvellous
beauty & grandeur we were suddenly remind-
ed that we were of the earth & earthly, for
we were awfully hungry, and in that
particular the whole wagon load sympathized.
We had a small remnant of a roast Chicken
Crockers & Sponge-Cake & soon overtook
some children with pails of raspberries, wh.
we purchased, & made a sumptuous meal.
We arrived at this house between nine &
ten o'clock — The piazza was thronged —
friends, expecting friends — but when
we sprang from the wagon their
disappointment was great — The Land-
lord kindly took us into the parlor
& told us his house was overflowing,
he had not a room in the house
that was not crowded — Then I said
we are so weary (having travelled 223 miles)
why can't you let us have some mattresses
on the floor — My pleading touched him,

heart, then I thought me where is
Ednah all this time - It seems she did
not understand when we were to come
she was sent for, & Mrs. Channing, a
joyful greeting we received when they
made their appearance, but Ednah
at once exclaimed "where is Sarah Whit-
ney, I depended upon her coming?"
Ednah & Mrs. C. were a host within themselves,
we soon had this nice parlor ornamented
with two bedsteads, & a promise that we
might remain over the Sabbath, but
still we are here, though we have
been told that we must lodge at one
of the neighboring houses - We packed
our trunks, & appeared so amiable they
did not have the heart to send us off -
So here we are. - The other day
we took a wagon & span of horses, &
went to Vermont Ednah Mrs. C. &
the children accompanying us. -
Friday we shall all visit the Glen-
Next week we intend to go to Digville
Notch, about 50 miles distant, the

excursion will take 3 days, then we
have Franconia, the Notch, Conway, &
Cotton Harbor to visit then you
may expect to see us in Yr. region.
I cannot move swiftly for May is
unable to bear the fatigue. Miss
Spalding is passing the day & night with
us wh. gives us great pleasure. —
I have left off a day, times, since
I commenced this epistle, I fear it
will be anything but coherent, but
Yr. love will excuse all —
What delight wld. have filled my heart
old. you have looked upon the Mts,
this day — Clouds of every tint & shape
Rainbows, Sunshine & Showers, in quick
succession — But I must bid you
good night with a world of love in
my heart for you both & a constant
yearning to have you here wh.
nothing will appear but Yr. presence.
We have made some cells among the
farmers & find some rare specimens.
One old Lady told us it was "dreadful

healthy here - (nobody nor nothing
ever died of anything "neutral here" -
I long to hear from you & Ann -
So write me - Direct to Jefferson
Hill, ^{N.H.} Waumbek House. I shall
be here a week longer, - remember it
takes two days for a letter to reach us,
Our love to all inquiring friends,
My love to yr. dear father & Mother,
I trust they are well.
I can bless you ever more

Mez.
Jefferson Hill, N.H.
Waumbek House
July 30th 1862.